

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1 - 6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously Presented) An agriculturally acceptable composition for initiating early flowering or budding in a nonleguminous plant comprising an effective amount of at least one lipo-chitooligosaccharide with at least one agriculturally acceptable carrier.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for initiating early flowering, budding or fruiting ~~or for increasing flower numbers or associated yield~~ in a nonleguminous plant comprising: a) ~~providing an effective amount of a lipo-chitooligosaccharide composition; and b) administering the composition to the plant~~ applying to foliage of the plant an effective amount of at least one lipo-chitooligosaccharide with one or more agriculturally acceptable carrier, wherein flowering, budding or fruiting is initiated early in the nonleguminous plant.

9. - 13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the lipo-chitooligosaccharide is administered at a concentration between about $10^{-5}M$ to about $10^{-14}M$.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the lipo-chitooligosaccharide is administered at a concentration between about $10^{-6}M$ to about $10^{-10}M$.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (New) The method of claim 8, wherein the nonleguminous plant is of the family *Brassicaceae*, *Solanaceae*, *Chenopodiaceae*, *Asteraceae*, *Malvaceae*, *Cucurbitaceae*, or *Poaceae*.

18. (New) The method of claim 8, wherein the one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide is applied at a concentration of from about 1ng per plant to about 1000 ng per plant.

19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant.

20. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide is applied at a concentration of from about 10 ng per plant to about 300 ng per plant.

21. (New) A method for increasing flower number or associated yield in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to foliage of the plant an effective amount of at least one lipo-chitooligosaccharide with one or more agriculturally acceptable carrier, wherein flower number or associated yield is increased in the nonleguminous plant.
22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the nonleguminous plant is of the family *Brassicaceae*, *Solonaceae*, *Chenopodiaceae*, *Asteraceae*, *Malvaceae*, *Cucurbitaceae*, or *Poaceae*.
23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide is applied at a concentration of from about 1ng per plant to about 1000 ng per plant
24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant.
25. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the one or more lipo-chitooligosaccharide is applied at a concentration of from about 10 ng per plant to about 300 ng per plant.
26. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the lipo-chitooligosaccharide is administered at a concentration between about 10^{-5} M to about 10^{-14} M.
27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the lipo-chitooligosaccharide is administered at a concentration between about 10^{-6} M to about 10^{-10} M.
28. (New) A method for initiating early flowering, budding or fruiting in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to foliage of the plant an effective amount of the composition of claim 7.
29. (New) A method for increasing flower number or associated yield in a nonleguminous plant comprising applying to foliage of the plant an effective amount of the composition of claim 7.
30. (New) The method of claim 8, wherein the nonleguminous plant is a tomato plant.